



The way I see it...

BY PAUL KINDINGER

New value propositions

In business, we constantly discuss how we can provide new and exciting “value propositions” to our customers. We are no different at NAEDA except our customers are thousands of dealers who are affiliated with NAEDA through their memberships with our affiliated associations. At the recent NAEDA board of directors meeting, we considered a plethora of new and exciting programs, products and services. In my time with NAEDA, over seven years now, I can’t remember a meeting agenda packed with more value propositions than this one. Let me share some of the news and ideas.

In some of my past columns, I have written about our **online program for processing warranty claims**. This program, you may recall, is a joint effort with FEMA and FEWA that will consolidate warranty policies, registration and claims for many specialty/shortline manufacturers and distributors into one place. It should make your life as a dealer a little easier and more efficient. Well, the NAEDA board granted final approval for the project and authorized us to roll it out in the near future.

Similarly, you have probably heard me mention at a meeting somewhere or read about the “power pro” program (formerly called OPE Customer Plus Program). It’s a dealership **accreditation program developed by the NAEDA OPE Dealer Council**. It has been under development for a couple of years and undergone extensive testing and revisions prior to receiving final approval at our recent meeting. This program, even in its developmental stage, has been downloaded from our Web site nearly 20,000 times to date. This exciting program will also be introduced soon.

Wow, I’m excited just recapping this for you. The NAEDA board also authorized us to pursue an agreement for an **identity theft protection and full restoration program**. This unique program will feature free seminars, which will provide dealers with information to comply with federal laws that require businesses, including dealerships, to protect sensitive (nonpublic) customer and employee information. These seminars alone could help you avoid thousands or even potentially millions of dollars in fines and penalties. Watch for details in NAEDA’s magazine and association newsletters about this program.

And if this were not enough, the NAEDA board approved an arrangement to provide an active **government affairs program in Canada**. It will include a NAEDA representative who will monitor both provincial and federal legislation, provide testimony in Ottawa

when necessary, and advance board-approved policies at the federal level. This effort will begin sometime in the 2008-09 fiscal year.

Also approved at the meeting was the **final report and recommendations of the NAEDA Market Share Task Force**. You can see the recommendations posted on our Web site. They will be shared with manufacturers as well. The report calls for specific changes to the current system to improve fairness, accuracy, transparency and validation of numbers. However, the report also calls for changes that are more dramatic if the current system is not responsive in a timely manner. Among possible future considerations is the development of alternative statistical sources for market share data. If needed, this would provide checks and balances to the current data.

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One last example, and there are several others, the NAEDA board spent a significant block of time discussing **workforce development**. In preparation for the meeting, NAEDA staff collected information about the efforts being made by the affiliated associations in this important priority area. Five affiliate association executives provided in-depth presentations to the board about their activities. A new standing committee, Workforce Development, will be asked to make further recommendations about how NAEDA can use its resources to support affiliates, dealers and other industry efforts in the future.

In conclusion, let me thank **Dennis Booth and his wife, Ann**, for their leadership and involvement as chairman of the board this past year. Similarly, congratulations to **Steve Kayton and his wife, Marie**, for picking up the gavel as we begin a new leadership year. NAEDA has been blessed in recent years with great leadership on the board. Thanks to all who serve.

I hope this provides you with a glimpse of how your NAEDA board is working to create new value propositions and meet the needs of dealers throughout North America. I hope you will agree it is – and that’s the way I see it. ■

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